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# Standards of accommodation for air travel

## Report of the Secretary-General*

*Summary*

The present report covers the period from 1 July 2001 to 30 June 2002, and is submitted in accordance with General Assembly decisions 44/442 of 21 December 1989 and 46/450 of 20 December 1991, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit annual reports on standards of accommodation for air travel. As also requested by the Assembly in its decision 40/455 of 18 December 1985 and section XIII of its resolution 45/248 A of 21 December 1990, respectively, information is included on expenditures by the United Nations for first-class air travel and relevant exceptions.

* This document could not be submitted by the established deadline owing to the need to receive information from various departments and offices pertaining to the travel year ended 30 June 2002.

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1. During the period under review, standards of accommodation for air travel were governed by General Assembly resolution 42/214 of 21 December 1987, in which the Assembly decided that all individuals, with the exception of the Secretary-General and the heads of delegations of the least developed countries to the regular and special sessions of the Assembly, whose travel was financed by United Nations organizations and programmes and who had been previously entitled to first-class accommodation, would be required to travel at the class immediately below first class. In the same resolution, the Assembly authorized the Secretary-General to exercise his discretion in making exceptions to allow first-class travel on a case-by-case basis.

## I. Delegation travel

2. The General Assembly, in its resolution 42/214, limited the payment of first-class accommodation by air to one representative of each Member State designated as a least developed country attending the regular and special sessions of the Assembly. For the fifty-sixth session, for the period from 1 July 2001 to 30 June 2002, claims submitted to date involved 18 such journeys, at a cost of $114,195.

## II. Exceptions authorized by the Secretary-General

3. As stated above, in General Assembly resolution 42/214, the Secretary-General was authorized to exercise his discretion in making exceptions to allow first-class air travel on a case-by-case basis. In addition, business-class travel by air may be authorized by the Secretary-General in certain circumstances, in accordance with administrative instruction ST/AI/2000/20 of 22 December 2000.

4. Generally, in reviewing cases that may warrant an exception, the Secretary-General takes into consideration the following circumstances:

(a) A medical condition may exist necessitating a level of comfort not available in the normal standard of accommodation to which the traveller is entitled. Such cases are referred to the Director of the Medical Services Division of the Secretariat for recommendation. It should be noted that the practice of granting exceptions in cases where a traveller is of an advanced age has been discontinued;

(b) The normal standard of accommodation is not available and, owing to the exigencies of the service, the traveller is required to travel on a particular date. Cases also arise where accommodation at the normal entitlement is not available and the cost of daily subsistence allowance, while waiting for the next available seat, would be greater than the higher standard of travel;

(c) The traveller is considered an eminent person, such as a former head of State, or a prominent international figure in political, humanitarian or cultural areas;

(d) The traveller is a prominent person who is donating his or her services free of charge to the Organization and, in some cases, at a loss of personal income. Such individuals may be accorded the standard of accommodation that they normally use when travelling;

(e) The traveller, after completing a full day of work, is required to travel through the night in order to resume work, attend meetings or present a paper at

another location on the following morning or immediately upon arrival. Where such cases involve arduous journeys, it has been deemed reasonable that the standard of accommodation accorded to the traveller should provide the best rest possible while travelling, or provide the conditions most conducive to work while flying, or both.

5. In respect of exceptions to air travel authorized during the period from 1 July 2001 to 30 June 2002 owing to the circumstances described in paragraph 4 above, the present report provides, in annexes I to V, detailed information on the additional cost of and reasons for such exceptions.

6. On 18 March 1998, the Secretary-General decided, as an exception, that all travel of the Deputy Secretary-General should be in first class, in keeping with her special status. As regards practical arrangements, efforts first are made to obtain upgrades to first class against payment of the full business-class fare. Where this is not feasible, the first-class fare is paid. During the reporting period, five such journeys were carried out, at a total additional cost of $12,412. Details of such travel are provided in annex VI to the present report.

7. To strengthen the ability of the President of the General Assembly to effectively and efficiently discharge the responsibilities of his Office, the General Assembly, in its resolution 52/214 of 18 December 1998, decided that the President, consistent with the approved programme budget, should have full authority to use the funds provided in the budget for the Office. Based on that authority, the President of the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session undertook travel in first class. During the reporting period, four such journeys were carried out, at a total additional cost of $27,277. Details of such travel are provided in annex VII to the present report.

8. Altogether, for travel during the period from 1 July 2001 to 30 June 2002, the Secretary-General exercised his discretion by authorizing, as an exception, 33 cases of first-class air travel. In addition, during the same period, the Secretary-General authorized business-class travel by air as an exception to the standards of accommodation in 43 cases.

9. It should be noted that, in accordance with the established practice to ensure personal safety, the Secretary-General was accompanied on all trips during the period under review by a personal aide/security officer who travelled by air in first class. The total additional cost of 11 such trips was $38,154.

10. While continuous administrative oversight has kept the number of exceptions at a minimum, it should be noted that in certain cases they are unavoidable. For example, exceptions owing to the lack of availability of regular standards are dictated by the exigencies of specific situations, and their number cannot therefore be kept constant or be forced to decrease without hampering the efficiency of the traveller's missions. Moreover, in many cases, to compel a traveller to wait until the established standard of travel becomes available would result in extra costs for the Organization for the daily subsistence allowance over and above the cost of an upgrade, an upgrade therefore remains the only cost-effective option.

11. In an effort to streamline the procedures for the granting of exceptions to the standards of accommodation for air travel, form TTS.3, "Request for exception to the standards of accommodation for air travel", was developed and made available on the United Nations Intranet during the period under review. Initial experience has

shown that efficiency gains have been achieved in administering requests for exceptions.

Table 1
**Summary of exceptions, 1 July 2001-30 June 2002**
(Cost in United States dollars)

| | *First class* | | *Business class* | | *Total* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Reasons for exceptions* | *Number of trips* | *Additional cost* | *Number of trips* | *Additional cost* | *Number of trips* | *Additional cost* |
| Medical condition | 4 | 11 856 | 15 | 17 335 | 19 | 29 191 |
| Regular standard of accommodation not available | 5 | 4 349 | 8 | 1 202 | 13 | 5 551 |
| Eminent persons | 9 | 16 942 | 13 | 5 897 | 22 | 22 839 |
| Donating services free of charge to the Organization | 7 | 33 830 | 2 | 4 083 | 9 | 37 913 |
| Arduous journeys | 1 | 2 727 | 5 | 7 335 | 6 | 10 062 |
| Personal aide/security officer | 11 | 38 154 | 0 | 0 | 11 | 38 154 |
| Deputy Secretary-General | 5 | 12 412 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 12 412 |
| President of the General Assembly | 4 | 27 277 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 27 277 |
| **Total** | **46** | **147 547** | **43** | **35 852** | **89** | **183 399** |

Table 2
**Summary of exceptions, 1 July 2000-30 June 2001**
(Cost in United States dollars)

| | *First class* | | *Business class* | | *Total* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Reasons for exceptions* | *Number of trips* | *Additional cost* | *Number of trips* | *Additional cost* | *Number of trips* | *Additional cost* |
| Medical condition | 5 | 8 707 | 12 | 18 381 | 17 | 27 088 |
| Regular standard of accommodation not available | 3 | 336 | 5 | 818 | 8 | 1 154 |
| Eminent persons | 8 | 11 980 | 12 | 23 898 | 20 | 35 782 |
| Donating services free of charge to the Organization | 7 | 15 705 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 15 705 |
| Arduous journeys | 0 | 0 | 1 | 292 | 1 | 292 |
| Personal aide/security officer | 11 | 37 559 | 0 | 0 | 11 | 37 559 |
| Deputy Secretary-General | 2 | 3 211 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 3 211 |
| President of the General Assembly | 1 | 4 300 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4 300 |
| **Total** | **37** | **81 798** | **30** | **43 389** | **67** | **125 091** |

# Annex I

## Exceptions authorized owing to medical conditions, 1 July 2001-30 June 2002

| *Designation of traveller* | *Itinerary*[a] | *Additional cost (United States dollars)* |
|---|---|---|
| **A. First class** | | |
| 1. Prosecutor, International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and International Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) | The Hague/New York/The Hague | 2 119 |
| 2. Prosecutor, ICTY and ICTR | Lugano/Washington/New York/The Hague | 2 336 |
| 3. Former Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on East Timor, invited by the Secretary-General to attend East Timor's independence | Tampa/Dili/Tampa | 4 146 |
| 4. Prosecutor, ICTY and ICTR | Amsterdam/Zurich/Nairobi/ Zurich/Lugano | 3 255 |
| **Subtotal** | | **11 856** |
| **B. Business class** | | |
| 1. Expert, Panel of Experts on Disability | Mexico City/New York/ Mexico City | 950 |
| 2. Expert's assistant, Panel of Experts on Disability | Mexico City/New York/ Mexico City | 950 |
| 3. Expert, Panel of Experts on Disability | Vancouver/New York/Vancouver | 1 888 |
| 4. Expert's assistant, Panel of Experts on Disability | Zimbabwe/New York/Zimbabwe | 1 888 |
| 5. Expert, Panel of Experts on Disability | Houston/New York/Houston | 1 325 |
| 6. Expert's assistant, Panel of Experts on Disability | Houston/New York/Houston | 1 325 |
| 7. Staff member, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) | New York/Geneva/New York | 702 |
| 8. Staff member, OCHA | New York/Geneva/New York | 702 |
| 9. Participant, Technical Group Meeting | London/Beirut/London | 1 271 |
| 10. Staff member, Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services | New York/Madrid/New York | 2 876 |
| 11. Civilian police officer, United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo | Pristina/Zurich/Bombay/Nagpur | 1 406 |
| 12. Staff member, OCHA | New York/Geneva/New York | 702 |
| 13. Staff member, Department of Economic and Social Affairs | New York/Paris/New York | 714 |
| 14. Staff member, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development | .../Sao Paulo/Rio de Janeiro/Santa Cruz/Lima/Quito/... | 189 |
| 15. Staff member, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees | Geneva/Cairo/Geneva | 447 |
| **Subtotal** | | **17 335** |
| **Total** | | **29 191** |

[a] The ellipses in a given itinerary indicate that some legs of the itinerary were by the regular standard of accommodation and no exception was involved.

# Annex II

## Exceptions authorized when the regular standard of accommodation was not available, 1 July 2001-30 June 2002

| *Designation of traveller* | *Itinerary*[a] | *Additional cost (United States dollars)* |
|---|---|---|
| **A. First class** | | |
| 1. Staff member, Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia | Cairo/Doha/Beirut | 120 |
| 2. Staff member, United Nations Institute for Training and Research | .../Abidjan/Freetown/... | 112 |
| 3. Staff member, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) | .../Los Angeles/Bangkok/... | 3 357 |
| 4. Deputy Representative, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees | Khartoum/London/... | 428 |
| **Subtotal** | | **4 017** |
| **B. Business class** | | |
| 1. Staff member, ESCAP | .../Paro/Bangkok | 80 |
| 2. Participant, Seminar on codification, Union Économique et Monetaire Ouest Africaine: Automated systems for customs data | Niamey/Ouagadougou/ Niamey | 46 |
| 3. Participant, ESCAP Meeting on development of Trans-Asian Railway Northern Corridor | .../Moscow/Vladivostok/... | 247 |
| 4. Participant, ESCAP Meeting on development of Trans-Asian Railway Northern Corridor | .../Moscow/Vladivostok/... | 247 |
| 5. Participant, ESCAP Meeting on development of Trans-Asian Railway Northern Corridor | .../Moscow/Vladivostok/... | 342 |
| 6. Participant, ESCAP Thematic Working Group on Disability-related Concerns, and Campaign 2001 for the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons | .../Dili/Denpasar/... | 103 |
| 7. Participant, ESCAP Thematic Working Group on Disability-related Concerns, and Campaign 2001 for the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons | .../Dili/Denpasar/... | 103 |
| 8. Vice-Rector, United Nations University | Tokyo/Macau/Tokyo | 34 |
| **Subtotal** | | **1 202** |
| **Total** | | **5 219** |

[a] The ellipses in a given itinerary indicate that some legs of the itinerary were by the regular standard of accommodation and no exception was involved.

# Annex III

## Exceptions authorized for eminent persons, 1 July 2001-30 June 2002

| *Designation of traveller* | *Itinerary* | *Additional cost (United States dollars)* |
|---|---|---|
| **A. First class** | | |
| **Meeting of the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council in Africa** | | |
| 1. Prime Minister of Namibia | Windhoek/Geneva/Windhoek | 1 472 |
| **Ministerial Meeting of the Tokyo International Conference on African Development** | | |
| 2. President of Mali | Bamako/Tokyo/Bamako | 1 146 |
| **Ad hoc expert group meetings on "Globalization and the State" and "Challenges and Changes in Public Administration around the World"** | | |
| 3. Prime Minister of Uganda | Kampala/New York/Kampala | 2 048 |
| **International Conference on e-Government for Development** | | |
| 4. Prime Minister of Mozambique | Maputo/Palermo/Maputo | 1 094 |
| **Fact-finding mission to Jenin pursuant to Security Council resolution 1405 (2002)** | | |
| 5. Former President of Finland | New York/Geneva/Tel Aviv/New York | 3 800 |
| 6. Former United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees | Geneva/Tel Aviv/New York | 3 612 |
| 7. Head of the International Committee of the Red Cross | Geneva/Tel Aviv/New York | 3 612 |
| **Secretary-General's Panel of Eminent Persons** | | |
| 8. Former Prime Minister of Pakistan | Washington/New York/Washington | 158 |
| **Subtotal** | | **16 942** |
| **B. Business class** | | |
| **Preparatory Meeting for the World Conference against Racism** | | |
| 1. Former President of Finland | Helsinki/Geneva/Helsinki | 0 |
| 2. Former Prime Minister of New Zealand | Auckland/Geneva/Auckland | 0 |
| 3. Former Minister for Foreign Affairs of Australia | Brussels/Geneva/Brussels | 108 |
| 4. President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union | New Delhi/Geneva/New Delhi | 0 |
| 5. Former Director-General, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) | Malaga/Geneva/Malaga | 104 |
| 6. Marseille Grand Mufti | Marseille/Geneva/Marseille | 52 |
| 7. Cardinal, Vatican City | Rome/Geneva/Rome | 41 |
| **Meeting on the United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations organized by the Office of the Secretary-General** | | |
| 8. Former Assistant Director-General for Culture, UNESCO | Mexico City/New York/Mexico City | 1 062 |

| *Designation of traveller* | *Itinerary* | *Additional cost (United States dollars)* |
|---|---|---|
| **Meeting in preparation for the World Summit on Sustainable Development** | | |
| 9. President of the Japan Institute of International Affairs | Tokyo/Bali/Singapore | 532 |
| **To testify at the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia** | | |
| 10. President of Kosovo | Pristina/The Hague/Pristina | 900 |
| 11. Escort to the President of Kosovo | Pristina/The Hague/Pristina | 900 |
| 12. Escort to the President of Kosovo | Pristina/The Hague/Pristina | 900 |
| 13. Ambassador of Norway to the United States of America | .../Amsterdam/Washington | 1 298 |
| **Subtotal** | | **5 897** |
| **Total** | | **22 839** |

# Annex IV

## Exceptions authorized for prominent persons donating their services free of charge to the Organization, 1 July 2001-30 June 2002

| *Designation of traveller* | *Itinerary* | *Additional cost (United States dollars)* |
|---|---|---|
| **A. First class** | | |
| **World Conference against Racism** | | |
| 1. UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador | New York/Durban/New York | 3 401 |
| 2. UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador's wife | New York/Durban/New York | 3 401 |
| **Unveiling of "Spirit of Audrey" Special Session on Children** | | |
| 3. UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador | Monte Carlo/London/New York | 5 839 |
| 4. UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador's wife | Monte Carlo/London/New York | 5 839 |
| 5. UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador | Nice/Tokyo/Seoul/Los Angeles/New York/Nice | 6 505 |
| 6. UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador's wife | Nice/Tokyo/Seoul/Los Angeles/New York/Nice | 6 505 |
| **UNEP Sasakawa Environment Prize Award Ceremony** | | |
| 7. H.M. Queen of Jordan | Amman/New York/Amman | 2 340 |
| **Subtotal** | | **33 830** |
| **B. Business class** | | |
| **Second session of the United Nations Forum on Forests** | | |
| 1. Chairman of the high-level ministerial segment | Bogota/New York/Bogota | 607 |
| **External review group meeting (in connection with the Secretary-General's reform efforts)** | | |
| 2. President of Amnesty International | London/New York/London | 3 476 |
| **Subtotal** | | **4 083** |
| **Total** | | **37 913** |

# Annex V

## Exceptions authorized for cases involving arduous journey, 1 July 2001-30 June 2002

| *Designation of traveller* | *Itinerary*[a] | *Additional cost (United States dollars)* |
|---|---|---|
| **A. First class** | | |
| 1. Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan | .../Paris/New York | 2 727 |
| **Subtotal** | | **2 727** |
| **B. Business class** | | |
| 1. Staff member, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) | New York/Paris/Geneva/London/ New York | 2 233 |
| 2. Staff member, UNDP | New York/Stockholm/New York | 2 418 |
| 3. Staff member, UNDP | New York/Brussels/New York | 774 |
| 4. Staff member, UNDP | .../Helsinki/London/New York | 1 320 |
| 5. President of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia | .../Sarajevo/Paris | 590 |
| **Subtotal** | | **7 335** |
| **Total** | | **10 062** |

[a] The ellipses in a given itinerary indicate that some legs of the itinerary were by the regular standard of accommodation and no exception was involved.

# Annex VI

## Exceptions relating to the travel of the Deputy Secretary-General, 1 July 2001-30 June 2002

| *Designation of traveller* | *Itinerary*[a] | *Additional cost (United States dollars)* |
|---|---|---|
| **A. First class** | | |
| 1. Deputy Secretary-General | New York/Dili/New York | 4 448 |
| 2. Deputy Secretary-General | New York/Turin/Montreal/... | 110 |
| 3. Deputy Secretary-General | .../Geneva/Vienna/... | 2 874 |
| 4. Deputy Secretary-General | New York/Brussels/Rome/Geneva/New York | 2 984 |
| 5. Deputy Secretary-General | New York/Denver/San Francisco/New York | 1 996 |
| **Total** | | **12 412** |

[a] The ellipses in a given itinerary indicate that some legs of the itinerary were by the regular standard of accommodation and no exception was involved.

# Annex VII

## Exceptions relating to the travel of the President of the General Assembly, 1 July 2001-30 June 2002

| *Designation of traveller* | *Itinerary* | *Additional cost (United States dollars)* |
|---|---|---|
| **A. First class** | | |
| 1. President of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly | New York/Oslo/Geneva/New York | 7 551 |
| 2. President of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly | New York/Monterrey/New York | 4 271 |
| 3. President of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly | Seoul/Madrid/Accra/Dakar/Seoul | 6 594 |
| 4. President of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly | New York/Rome/Vienna/Prague/Seoul | 8 861 |
| **Total** | | **27 277** |